THE NEW
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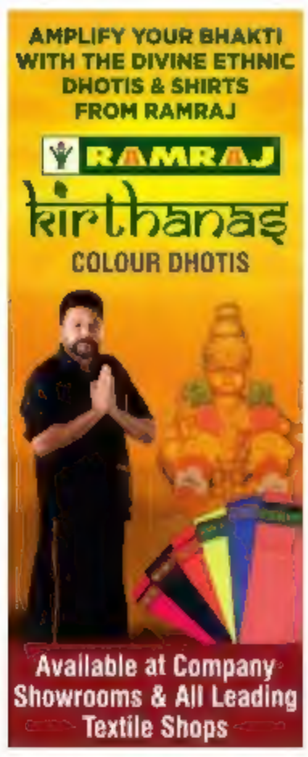
Link PAN with Aadhaar by Mar 31 or it will be defunct

Permanent account numbers (PAN) that are not linked with Aadhaar by March-end next year will become inoperative, the Income Tax Department said on Saturday, and advised people to link them immediately. Also, the Unique Identification Authority of India has urged Aadhaar holders, who were issued the unique identity 10 years back, to update their documents in its database.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Rahul raps BJP, says it is stoking hatred

UJWAL JALALI @ New Delhi

AFTER travelling 2,800 km on foot, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, leading the Bharat Jodo Yatra with thousands of partymen, entered the national capital on Saturday and berated the ruling dispensation from outside the iconic Red Fort.

"This government just wants to divert attention from real issues. They will keep on doing Hindu-Muslim and spread communal hatred and fear," Gandhi alleged while addressing a huge rally.

Braving cold weather conditions, Gandhi donned a white T-shirt throughout his 45 km foot march that began as early as 6 am from the southeast end of Delhi till the Red Fort.

Thousands of party workers, including senior leaders, have been walking with him for the past 108 days.

On Saturday, former party president Sonia Gandhi, her daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, son-in-law Robert Vadra and their children joined Gandhi in the march.

Congress workers could be seen dancing and singing to the tunes of patriotic songs and at various places en route to the Red Fort, people showered flower petals on the Yatris.

Gandhi also came down heavily on a certain section of the media for spreading communal hatred. "Media is our friend but they never show us on TV... For 24X7 they do Hindu-Muslim, Hindu-Muslim, and Hindu-Muslim... I walked 2,800 km and I didn't see hatred anywhere. But whenever I switch on the TV, I see violence and hatred because they (BJP) want to divert attention," he alleged.

NEW CHEMISTRY: Makkal Needhi Maiam chief and veteran actor Kamal Haasan participating in Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, in New Delhi on Saturday | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On his way to the Red Fort, the Congress leader was joined by actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan, who walked along with him from the centrally located ITO till the end of the foot march. Sharing the podium with Rahul outside the Red Fort, Haasan said he stands today here as an Indian.

"I am here as an Indian. My father was a Congressman. I had various ideologies and started my own political party but when it comes to the country, all political party lines have to blur. I blurred that line and came here," said the 68-year-old veteran actor.

The Yatra has so far touched 46 districts in nine states.

MAN STABBED TO DEATH IN SURATHKAL

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mangaluru

TENSION prevailed in Surathkal near Mangaluru after a person was stabbed to death by miscreants on Saturday evening.

According to sources, the incident took place at Krishnapura 4th block, when the victim, Jaleel, was standing near a shop. The victim, who was rushed to a nearby hospital, died.

Meanwhile, Mangaluru City Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar confirmed the incident. He said investigation is under progress and said the reason for the stabbing is yet to be ascertained.

Section 144 has been imposed in Surathkal.

Abandoned tea workers show pluck

NEJMA SULAIMAN @ Idukki

THE only reason for 76-year-old Ganeshan and his wife Annabhagyam to continue living in their rundown, single-room house at the tea workers' quarters, on Division 2 of the 2,700-acre Peermade Tea Company (PTC) plantation, is the hope that its owner will one day reopen the estate and pay their PF and gratuity dues, amounting to over ₹4 lakh.

When it rains heavily, the couple is forced to abandon their ramshackle residence and seek shelter elsewhere. They return when the skies clear up to pick up the pieces — patch up the roofs and cover them with tarpaulin sheets. For the past 22 years, this has been the routine for them as well as the 500-odd tea-worker families settled in Division 4 of the estate, near Elappara in Kerala's Idukki district.

The tea factory of Peermade Tea Company, which was closed in 2002

PTC ended operations in 2000. But its over 1,300 employees continued working on the estate, earning a living from the sale of tea leaves they themselves pluck. The allotment — restricted to 1,200 bushes per worker — is decided by the unions, which more or less run the show.

The fortunes of the company, owned by Thiruvananthapuram-resident Rama Krishna Sarma, started to decline when it failed to fetch good prices in auctions. Production costs escalated and revenue decreased. Global recession and poor management worsened the crisis. As the company faced losses, it denied salaries and benefits to labourers, which prompted protests. The owner finally abandoned the firm on December 13, 2000.

As employees can now work only the bushes allotted to them, plucking is carried out 15 days a month as it takes 20 days for the tender leaves to grow on shrubs. CONTINUED ON: P7

EXPRESS READ

Court orders survey of Mathura mosque

Lucknow: A local court in Mathura, hearing the Sri Krishna Janmasthan-Shahi Idgah dispute case, has ordered a survey of the disputed site on the lines of the Gyanvapi mosque survey. Judge Sonika Verma said the survey report should be submitted to the court by January 20. P8

CM Bommai says he'll present budget in Feb

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday announced that he will present the state budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 in February 2023. He told reporters in Shiggaon that he has already held two rounds of talks with Finance Department officials in this regard. P4

The New Indian Express wishes its readers

'Start early'

TRAFFIC TOP COP'S ADVICE TO B'LUREANS

Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) MA Saleem has an advice to motorists: Start 10 minutes early. He shares his plans and vision with TNSE

| EXPRESS DIALOGUES: Page 4

KEEPING TIME

WITH THIS ISSUE
PLUS 12 PAGES
MAGAZINE

40% cut charge: Contractors' body prez held

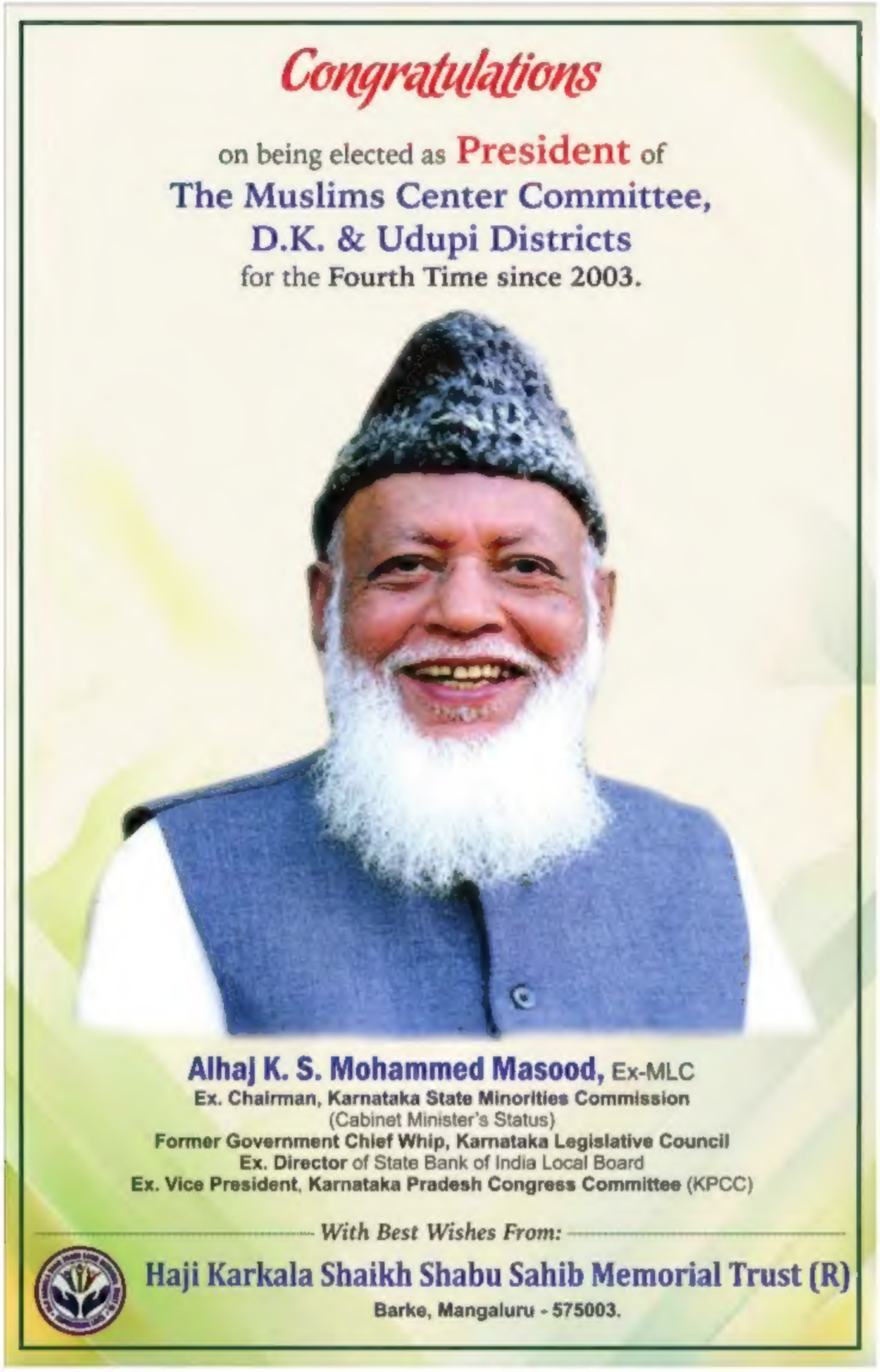
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA State Contractors' Association (KSCA) president D Kempanna, along with three others, was arrested by the Vyalikaval police on Saturday in a defamation suit.

Horticulture Minister N Munirathna had filed a defamation case against Kempanna and 18 other members of the contractors' association for accusing him of collecting 40 per cent commission from contractors for awarding tenders.

Munirathna, who is also Kolar district incharge minister, had sent a notice to the association on September 1, seeking a compensation of ₹50 crore for defaming him.

CONTINUED ON: P4


Congratulations
on being elected as President of
The Muslims Center Committee,
D.K. & Udupi Districts
for the Fourth Time since 2003.
Alhaj K. S. Mohammed Masood, Ex-MLC
Ex. Chairman, Karnataka State Minorities Commission
(Cabinet Minister's Status)
Former Government Chief Whip, Karnataka Legislative Council
Ex. Director of State Bank of India Local Board
Ex. Vice President, Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC)
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